

COLL. CAT.

FACTS

CONCERNING

Slaughter-houses, Rendering Establishments,

AND

OTHER NUISANCES;

Pestilence and the Depreciation of Property.

Collected and Published for the Citizens of New York,

BY ORDER OF

THE COMMITTEE OF SAFETY.



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INTRODUCTION.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE has said: "Peace has its victories as well as war, and it has also its unnecessary losses from disease and death; *only the losses of peace are greater than those of war, because they are daily and constant.*" To protect against such losses Boards of Health are instituted; and when these Boards fail to render such protection, it becomes necessary for the people to see to it that the State receives no injury.

ROOSEVELT HOSPITAL.

On the 10th of March, 1874, the Roosevelt Hospital, alarmed by a movement in the Board of Health looking to the establishment of monster abattoirs in its neighborhood, appeared by its counsel, Mr. Delafield, before that Board, and uttered its earnest protest and warning against these nuisances.

The evils apprehended were the slaughtering of cattle, the liquid refuse and blood poisoning the river, the gut-cleaning, the glue-making, the rendering and fat-boiling establishments, the factories for turning bones into lime and grinding them into fertilizers, the sheds for keeping the hides before they could be removed for drying, the factories for preparing the hair, the meat-smoking houses, the noise from the approach of butchers' wagons and material carts, and from the whistling of the steam-engines, and the removal in barges of the manure and offal.

The whole matter at that time was involved in mystery, and the Hospital was unable to ascertain in whose interest or by whom the ordinance before the Board was pressed.

At a second meeting of the Health Board, held on the 17th of March, 1874, the Medical Board of the Roosevelt Hospital presented the following protest:

FIRST PROTEST OF MEDICAL BOARD OF ROOSEVELT HOSPITAL.

ROOSEVELT HOSPITAL,
NEW YORK, March 16, 1874. }

To the Board of Health of the City of New York:

At a meeting of the Medical Board of the Roosevelt Hospital, held this day, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, That in the opinion of this Board the establishment of the

proposed abattoir, with its accompanying nuisances in the shape of fat-boiling, gut-cleaning, and glue-making establishments, in the neighborhood of the Roosevelt Hospital, would be, by poisoning the air of the whole region, exceedingly injurious to the health of its inmates. While we are striving by every means which hygienic science has afforded us to make our hospital as free from contaminating influences of all kinds as it can possibly be made, we cannot but believe that the proposed measure will go far to neutralize all the good which has been accomplished, and defeat all our efforts for maintaining the salubrity of this institution.

The Medical Board of the Roosevelt Hospital therefore respectfully petition the Board of Health not to pass the ordinance which allows of the erection of an abattoir in the immediate neighborhood of the hospital.

A. CLARK, M.D., *President.*

ROBT. WATTS, M.D., *Secretary.*

WILLARD PARKER, M.D.,

GURDON BUCK, M.D.,

H. B. SANDS, M.D.,

ROBT. F. WEIR, M.D.,

T. M. MARKOE, M.D.,

T. GAILLARD THOMAS, M.D.,

W. H. DRAPER, M.D.,

FRANCIS DELAFIELD, M.D.,

ERSKINE MASON, M.D.

BUTCHERS.

The butchers of the city attended these meetings and protested with the utmost earnestness against the injustice of removing them from the establishments which they had within a few years erected with the permission of the Board of Health.

UNION STOCK-YARD AND MARKET COMPANY.

On the 7th of May, 1872, an act was passed by the Legislature, incorporating the "Union Stock-Yard and Market Company," the first section of which authorized that company to "hold, lease, mortgage, and convey such real, personal, or leasehold property or franchise in this or other States as they may deem necessary for the purposes of such corporation." The second section authorized them in substance to maintain and operate buildings or establishments for the keeping, killing, manufacturing into articles of commerce and rendering of cattle and other carcasses [Laws of 1872, page 1419].

REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF BOARD OF HEALTH.

In June, 1874, the Sanitary Committee of the Board of Health made a report to that body, recommending the establishment of abattoirs within the city, but providing that no building should be erected or converted into an abattoir the plans of which had not been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Board of Health.

The urgency with which the matter was pressed by some unseen hand produced another protest from the Medical Board of the Roosevelt Hospital, as follows :

SECOND PROTEST OF ROOSEVELT HOSPITAL.

ROOSEVELT HOSPITAL, NEW YORK.

The undersigned, members of the Medical Board of the Roosevelt Hospital, having already filed some of their objections to the passage of an ordinance confining all slaughtering of animals and the accompanying nuisances of herding, fat-boiling, gut-cleaning, bone-grinding, accumulation, and removal of manure, etc., to any one locality within the city, and especially to the neighborhood of this hospital, as dangerous to the public health, hereby desire to renew their former protest, and to request that any action of the Board of Health on the subject, adverse to the interests represented by the undersigned, may be delayed till October next, in order to give time for the Hospital to present a memorial setting forth at length their reasons in objection.

(Signed)	GURDON BUCK,	H. B. SANDS,
	WILLARD PARKER,	R. F. WEIR,
	ERSKINE MASON,	JOHN T. METCALFE,
	W. H. DRAPER,	T. M. MARKOE,
	ROBERT WATTS,	A. CLARK,
	W. H. THOMSON.	

ORDINANCE OF HEALTH BOARD.

On the 13th of October, 1874, the Board of Health adopted the following resolution and ordinance :

“Resolved, That under the power conferred by law on the Health Department, the following additional section to the Sanitary Code, for the security of life and health, be, and the same is, hereby adopted and declared to form a portion of the Sanitary Code :

Section 184. “That on and after the fourth day of July, 1876, the business of slaughtering animals in the city of New York shall not be conducted south of One Hundred and Tenth Street, unless the same shall be done in buildings located directly upon the water-front, each having a capacity sufficient for the yarding and slaughtering daily of one-half of the entire number of cattle, or hogs, or small stock (all or separately, according to the particular objects of each abattoir) slaughtered in this city at the time this ordinance shall go into effect, and so constructed as to receive all stock deliverable thereat directly from cars or transports ; and to discharge therefrom all liquid refuse below low-water mark ; and to secure the proper care and disposition of all parts of the slaughtered animals upon the premises, or the immediate removal thereof by means of boats. And on and after the fourth day of July, 1876, no cattle, sheep, hogs, or calves shall be driven in the streets of such city below

One Hundred and Tenth Street ; nor shall any offensive business growing out of that of slaughtering, as fat-melting, hide-curing, gut-cleaning, bone-boiling, glue-making, etc., etc., be conducted except on the premises constructed and prepared as herein required, and devoted to the slaughtering and the disposing thereon of all parts of the slaughtered animals as aforesaid ; nor shall any fat, hides, hoofs, or entrails, or other refuse parts of slaughtered animals (except fat or tallow attached to meat exposed for sale or collected by licensed dealers) be transported in said streets ; nor shall any buildings be erected, or converted into, or used as a slaughter-house, until the plans thereof have been duly submitted to the Board of Health, and approved in writing by the said Board."

On the 19th of January, 1874, this ordinance was amended, so that Fortieth Street was declared the southerly limit, below which slaughtering would not be allowed, with the exception contained in the ordinance itself.

RULE OF HEALTH BOARD.

The thirty-third rule of the Health Department of the city of New York provides that "persons desirous of procuring a permit to slaughter animals at any place where slaughtering is not carried on shall advertise in three daily morning journals twice a week, for two weeks, their intention of applying to the Board of Health for the permit at a specified time, giving in said advertisement the location proposed."

APPLICATION OF UNION STOCK-YARD FOR PERMIT.

Some time in February, 1875, the Union Stock-Yard and Market Company made application to the Board of Health for a permit to erect an abattoir at the foot of West Fifty-eighth and Fifty-ninth Streets. As soon as this was discovered by the citizens objections and remonstrances began to flow in to the Board of Health.

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH.

On the 23d of March, 1875, they held a meeting, at which, on application of Mr. Delafield, the counsel of the Roosevelt Hospital, all action was deferred, to enable the Medical Board of that hospital to examine the plans proposed by the Union Stock-Yard Company for its abattoir. Mr. Martin, the secretary of that Company, afterwards attended a meeting of the Medical Board, and explained the plans to them, with such statements as he saw fit to make. They examined them, and presented the following protest :

THIRD PROTEST OF ROOSEVELT HOSPITAL.

NEW YORK, March 29, 1875.

To the Honorable Board of Health of the City of New York :

GENTLEMEN : The undersigned, members of the Medical Board of the Roosevelt Hospital, having carefully examined and deliberately con-

sidered the plans of the proposed abattoir on the North River at the foot of Fifty-ninth Street, do hereby respectfully but earnestly repeat the protest they have already entered against the erection of these abattoirs in such immediate vicinity to the Roosevelt Hospital.

This protest is based upon the following grounds :

First. That the business of slaughtering animals and rendering the offal has never yet been carried on without the production of such noisome odors and poisonous vapors as are calculated, if not to deteriorate the health of those who are well, at least to disturb the comfort and impede the convalescence of those who are ill.

Second. That the projectors of these abattoirs, though they present plans and introduce processes which promise to do away with many of the objections which pertain to the old methods of slaughtering and rendering, furnish no sufficient guarantees that, even with these improvements, the business can be conducted without creating a nuisance which should not be tolerated in the neighborhood of a large hospital.

Third. That, though the projectors of these abattoirs base the innocuous character of their method upon the fact that they render offal which is fresh, there is nothing in their charter which prohibits them from rendering the offal from other establishments which is in a state of putrefaction.

On these grounds the undersigned beg your Honorable Board, as the guardians of the public health, to exercise your power to prevent the erection of what we believe will inevitably become to the neighboring residents an intolerable nuisance, and to the sick in one of the largest and noblest of our public charities a source of perpetual contamination to the purity of the air, which is so essential to the cure of disease.

Respectfully submitted,

(Signed) A. CLARK, President Medical Board.
 ROBERT WATTS, M.D., Secretary Medical Board.
 WILLIAM H. THOMSON, M.D.
 ERSKINE MASON, M.D.
 H. B. SANDS, M.D.
 T. M. MARKOE, M.D.
 FRANCIS DELAFIELD.
 ROBERT F. WEIR, M.D.
 WILLARD PARKER, M.D.
 W. H. DRAPER, M.D.
 GURDON BUCK.

MEETING OF HEALTH BOARD.

On the 30th of March, 1875, another meeting was held before the Board of Health, which was very largely attended by property-holders, the representatives of the Roosevelt Hospital, of St. Paul's Church, in Fifty-ninth Street, the school trustees, Dr. Geer, and others. A large

meeting had previously been held in St. Paul's Church, in Fifty-ninth Street, in which the subject was explained and urgent remonstrances made by its large congregation, which were now presented to the Board of Health.

The Board of School Trustees of the Twenty-second Ward presented the following protest to the Board of Aldermen :

PROTEST OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES.

The Board of School Trustees of the Twenty-second Ward earnestly protest against the erection of a slaughter-house and its accompanying nuisances on the Hudson River, between Fifty-eighth and Fifty-ninth Streets, for the following reasons :

First. No slaughter-house has ever been erected in the heart of a large city without seriously impairing the public health and entailing the gravest injury to the neighboring property.

Second. The character of our institutions is such that it has been found almost impossible to execute rigorously the sumptuary and hygienic laws which in other countries alone make abattoirs tolerable.

Third. This neighborhood is now thickly, and likely to become densely, populated. Our schools are so situated as to be directly exposed to the noisome stinks that must come from such a slaughter-house, and we contemplate the erection of a new one in Fifty-seventh Street, in the immediate vicinity of the proposed abattoir.

There were upwards of sixteen thousand children attending the schools in this ward during 1874, whose physical as well as intellectual training is committed to us as a sacred trust; and we should consider ourselves failing in this high duty if we did not most vigorously protest and apply to the courts and Legislature for relief against an evil of such gigantic magnitude.

JOEL M. MASON,	}	<i>Trustees of the Twenty-second Ward.</i>
J. D. CUMING,		
A. H. UNDERHILL,		
JOHN MORGAN,		
WALTER CARTER,		

Some of the largest property-owners in the city presented the following protest to the Board of Health, and afterwards to the Board of Aldermen :

PROTEST OF PROPERTY-HOLDERS.

The undersigned, property-owners in the Twenty-second Ward of the city of New York, near the foot of Fifty-ninth Street, North River, do most earnestly remonstrate and protest against the erection of an

abattoir in that vicinity, as detrimental to the health of the neighborhood and ruinous to the value and enjoyment of their property.

Dated New York, March 27, 1875.

(Signed) F. Marx—11 lots.
 John Arbogast—house and lot.
 Amos R. Eno.
 V. K. Stevenson—25 lots.
 William Zinsser—16 lots.
 John Auck.
 Susan Jefferson—8 lots.
 Conrad Stein—16 lots.
 Ph. Schaefer—19 lots.
 A. H. Hart & Co.—14 lots.
 J. H. Havens—4 lots, lease.
 Richard Casey.
 Charles C. Clausen—4 lots.
 Schwaner & Amend—10 lots.
 Ernest H. Herb—2 lots.
 Michael Treacy—5 lots and houses.

The Paulist Fathers presented an earnest remonstrance, referring to the great church (next to the cathedral in size), in process of erection, which would be abandoned if an abattoir was located near it.

The public indignation then took the form of a mass-meeting in opposition to the project, which was called for the 9th of April. As soon as the notices for this meeting appeared in the newspapers the Union Stock-Yard and Market Company withdrew its application for a permit, and the following notice was sent to the counsel of the Roosevelt Hospital:

HEALTH DEPARTMENT, NO. 301 MOTT STREET, }
 NEW YORK, April 7, 1875. }

Lewis L. Delafield, Esq., No. 49 Exchange Place:

SIR: At a meeting of the Board of Health, held on the 6th inst., the application of the Union Stock-Yard and Market Company for a permit to erect an abattoir at the foot of West Fifty-eighth and Fifty-ninth Streets was withdrawn.

I am directed by the Board to notify you of this fact, and that there will, therefore, be no hearing upon the subject on Tuesday, the 13th inst.
 Yours, etc.,

EMMONS CLARK, *Secretary.*

PROTEST OF FIVE THOUSAND CITIZENS.

The following protest, signed by upwards of 5,000 persons, was presented to the Board of Health and to the Aldermen of the city of New York:

"The undersigned respectfully represent that the slaughtering of cattle, etc., at the proposed abattoir at the foot of Fifty-ninth Street and

North River, in said city, will make property comparatively worthless, will endanger the health of the inhabitants of the city, and especially of that part of it immediately in the neighborhood of the Central Park, while the Park itself will no longer be a place of healthful recreation for the people.

"And we, therefore, protest against a permit being granted to any person, firm, or corporation to slaughter cattle, sheep, or hogs, or to carry on the business of disposing of offal, fat, or bones, either at the foot of Fifty-ninth Street and North River or at any place west of the Central Park, in said city; and we request and urge your honorable body to take such action in the premises as will for ever protect us and the people of this city from such nuisances as slaughter-houses, abattoirs, and the boiling, burning, and rendering of the offal, fat, and bones of dead animals."

MASS-MEETING.

On the 9th of April the mass-meeting alluded to was held in the Central Park Garden, and attended by several thousand people. Mr. William R. Martin, one of the Central Park Commissioners, presided, and speeches were delivered by the Hon. Fernando Wood and Lewis L. Delafield, Esq., to a very enthusiastic and indignant audience. The following resolutions were unanimously passed:

RESOLUTIONS.

Resolved, That the presence and operation of such monster slaughter-houses in the heart of the city are nuisances of an intolerable, hurtful, and ruinous nature.

Resolved, That the Mayor and Board of Aldermen be prayed and petitioned to investigate the nature, purpose, and intent of the aforesaid ordinance of the Board of Health, in the interests of the city, and to protect the citizens thereof from the consequences of carrying out the provisions of the same.

Resolved, That the Board of Health be petitioned to rescind and for ever abolish all that portion of the aforementioned ordinance and amended section of Sanitary Code included under the exceptions therein expressed.

Resolved, That Lewis L. Delafield, Horatio Paine, M.D., John Jacob Astor, Royal Phelps, Amos R. Eno, George V. Hecker, R. A. Witthaus, Hon. Fernando Wood, Adrian H. Muller, Nathaniel Jarvis, Jr., William Zinsser, Conrad Braker, Jr., Rowland N. Hazard, John R. Graham, Benj. P. Fairchild, Benj. F. Crane, Roswell D. Hatch, Thos. S. Brennan, Thomas O'Callaghan, James P. Campbell, Z. J. Halpin, Alexander Spalding, Elie Charlier, William H. Allen, John Morgan, Wm. Eagle, Rev. Alfred Young, G. J. Geer, D.D., be, and they hereby are, appointed

A COMMITTEE OF SAFETY

in behalf of the citizens of the Twelfth, Twenty-second, and Nineteenth Wards, especially to prevent the establishment of any new slaughter-

houses and their accompanying nuisances within those wards, with full power to raise money, employ counsel, commence and prosecute actions, apply for legislation, and take every requisite step to effect the object in view.

Resolved, That the Board of School Commissioners, the Central Park Commissioners, the public press, and all the citizens are earnestly requested to unite in carrying out the object of this meeting and of the resolutions.

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to present to the Mayor, the Board of Aldermen, and Board of Health a copy of this preamble and resolutions, together with the protest and petition mentioned in the preamble, as evidence of the grievous discontent and fears for the safety of the health and property of the numerous and respectable signers thereof, as well as of their earnest desire and prayer that the objects for which this meeting is convened, and which are expressed in these resolutions, be fully carried out."

PUBLIC UNEASINESS.

The public press was unanimous in condemning this scheme. Notwithstanding the withdrawal of the application for a permit by the Union Stock-Yard Company, a feeling of great uneasiness and want of confidence prevailed among the citizens at large. The work on the abattoir was progressing. It was supposed that the Hudson River Railroad Company had an interest in the measure, and that a great monopoly was contemplated. The public press stated that the reasons of the Union Stock-Yard Company for withdrawing its application were only because they preferred to wait a short time until the present excitement should abate, and that they expected to be able to persuade the people that abattoirs were harmless in their nature.

The following opinions of the press, culled from a great number of articles, show the state of public feeling :

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

The *Herald* of April 7 says :

"A THREATENED NUISANCE.—In a communication which we publish to-day will be found a statement of facts of which the Health Board should take cognizance, if that body wish to fulfil their duties toward the public. It appears that abattoirs have been established on the North River, in a district where the slaughtering of animals and the disposal of the refuse of the dead carcasses may seriously interfere with public health during the warm weather. It is a subject fraught with interest to the city, and demands imperatively instant investigation."

The *Herald* of April 13 says :

"The protest of the people against the proposed abattoir on the North River took an official form yesterday at a meeting of the Board of Aldermen. Mr. Delafield's argument against the outrage on the public health, and that of Professor Chandler, will be found in another column, and deserve careful consideration. All slaughter-houses should be beyond the limits of a great city."

The Times says :

"Abattoir is a word which begins many encyclopedias, and people who live up-town will find out what it means if the proposal to establish an abattoir at the foot of Fifty-ninth Street is carried out. In such a climate as ours no such place ought to exist in the midst of a crowded neighborhood. That stands to reason. There are nuisances enough about, and bad smells enough, without setting up a place for slaughtering cattle in such a locality as Fifty-ninth Street. The stench which it would cause during the heats of summer would create a pestilence in that part of the city. Strong representations have been made on this subject to the Aldermanic Committee on Health, and Professor Chandler promised that the 'whole matter should be carefully considered.' It is much to be hoped that the project will be abandoned."

The World of April 7 says :

"NO ABATTOIR WANTED AT THE FOOT OF FIFTY-NINTH STREET.—At a meeting of the Board of Health yesterday, an application for a permit to slaughter animals in the abattoir to be erected at the foot of West Fifty-ninth Street was withdrawn. This is considered a victory for the trustees of the Roosevelt Hospital and the west-side property-owners who have opposed the erection of the abattoir, on the ground that it would be a nuisance."

The Graphic of April 17, in concluding a long article, said :

"It will be seen that the new regulations in London are now nearly as complete and effective as those in Paris. Abattoirs have been erected outside the city, and have been occupied. The uproar made against the inviolability of property was met by the fact that there was such a thing as the inviolability of human life. It was proved by the best scientific authorities that the mass of offal that accrued daily from the slaughtering of cattle, and the difficulty of disposing of this refuse, contaminated the air, and was most damaging to the health of the community. After a long struggle the point for which the people and the press contended was carried. There is something in the contest in which the authorities of New York at present might derive information."

The Graphic again says :

"It is certainly to be hoped that the establishment of an abattoir at Fifty-ninth Street will be prohibited by the proper authorities. If the Health Board permits the erection of this gigantic nuisance in the midst of this crowded city, it should have its power taken from it by legislative enactment. There is no way by which such an immense slaughter-house can be made clean, and healthy, and unobjectionable to the residents of a large and contiguous district. It is in the nature of things a distillery of stench and a distributor of foulness, to say nothing of the diseases it engenders and the disagreeable sights and circumstances it always accumulates about it. The Board of Health has no business to inflict such an institution upon a populous section of the city, reducing the value of property for half a mile in every direction, and tainting the air of half the metropolis. In fact, such a building ought never to be erected in a crowded city like this under any circumstances, when there are scores of places in the immediate vicinity where it could be profitably established. There is no more reason for butchering our cattle here before our eyes than for breeding and fattening them here, and there is scarcely less objection to a wholesale slaughter in the midst of the city than to an enormous piggery. What would be thought of turning Reservoir

Park into a public pigsty? There should be such an outcry against the proposed desecration as shall compel the authorities to retrace their ill-considered steps."

From the Graphic of April 14.

THE UP-TOWN SLAUGHTER-HOUSES—A PROPOSED ABATTOIR THAT THREATENS TO DEPOPULATE THE BEST SECTION OF THE CITY.—The public ought to be awake to the new and imminent danger that threatens it. For years New York has been cursed with the presence of ill-kept slaughter-houses and rendering establishments. Complaints have been annually made and as often disregarded. The persistency of the butchers and the compliant humor of our Boards of Health have time after time overborne the public indignation. Encouraged by this forbearance, a new corporation proposes to erect, contiguous to the residences of the wealthiest and most cultured portion of the citizens of Manhattan Island, an enormous establishment that is likely not only to combine all the varied smells and annoyances of other slaughtering and rendering establishments, but, by reason of its size and scope, to intensify them tenfold. The grand cattle-yard and abattoir at the foot of Fifty-ninth Street is to be the receptacle and place of final disposal of all that vast number of cattle, horses, hogs, and sheep that are transported over the New York Central Railroad, together with a portion of those which are brought by the Erie Road.

The processes of fat-boiling, bone-boiling, entrail-boiling, and blood-boiling—for all the slaughtering is to be done here—will be enough not only to render the entire neighborhood of Central Park almost uninhabitable, but will seriously affect the health of the whole city. It seems impossible that, under all the circumstances of the case, the application will be granted. Certainly an approval of the application will be criticised with severity by a large number of citizens and property-owners, and the best of reasons demanded for such a course of action.

If the proposed abattoir were a public necessity, the case would be different; but the example furnished by other cities shows that all such objectionable businesses can be carried on outside the city limits. It seems incredible that in New York such establishments are allowed to exist without compelling the proprietors to observe the precautions which are imposed in less populous cities.

From the Graphic of April 14.

THE ABATTOIR JOB.—From the reports of the discussion before the Health Committee of the Aldermen on Monday and Tuesday, there is reason to fear that the scheme to establish a vast slaughter-house at the foot of Fifty-ninth Street and the North River may prove successful. Professor Chandler, the President of the Health Commission, Mr. Stephen Smith, one of the Health Commissioners, and Professor Draper, have all seen a great light on the subject of slaughter-houses, and have made haste to assure the Aldermen that the proposed slaughter-house, so far from being a nuisance, will really add a new charm to the neighborhood where it is placed. Against these men the testimony of merely unscientific noses will hardly have its due weight. The protests of the property-holders, whose property will be largely deteriorated if a slaughter-house is placed in its vicinity, are sneered at by Professor Chandler, who asserts that the persons who sign petitions against the proposed abattoir do not know what an abattoir is. It will not be strange if the city authorities decide that the testimony of Health

Commissioners and chemists is, in this particular case, of more weight than the protests of property-holders, who, according to Professor Chandler, must be incapable of distinguishing between the smell of a slaughter-house and the perfume of violets.

It will naturally be asked to what this sudden scientific enthusiasm for a slaughter-house near the Hudson River Railroad track is due. We can understand why Commodore Vanderbilt should earnestly favor the scheme, since it will add greatly to the value of his share of the cattle-transportation business. The abattoir will be as useful to Vanderbilt's railroad as is the Hudson Street freight depot, and of course he will use every means to secure its establishment. But what community of interests have Messrs. Chandler and Smith and Draper with the railroad king in this matter? It must require strong arguments to induce a man, whether he is a chemist or not, to perceive that slaughter-houses are absolutely inoffensive.

If the scheme proves successful and permission is given for the building of the slaughter-house, it is very certain that an investigation will follow. The public will insist upon knowing the nature of the arguments which have won the Health Commissioners and Aldermen to its support. Of course Professors Chandler and Draper and Commissioner Smith will have no reason to fear the results of an investigation, but they will certainly regret the cost and trouble which such a proceeding entails.

The *Sun* of April 10 commences an article upon the subject with the following words in large print: "Will the Board of Health dare ruin the Central Park neighborhood?"

BOARD OF ALDERMEN.

On the 29th of March the matter was introduced into the Board of Aldermen as greatly affecting the interests of the city at large, and was referred to the proper committee. Two hearings were held before this committee on the 12th and the 13th of April, which were attended by the representatives of St. Paul's Church, of the Rev. Dr. Geer's Church, and Lewis L. Delafield, Esq., counsel of the Roosevelt Hospital, and of the property-holders, in opposition to the abattoir and its accompanying nuisances on the one side, and by Prof. Chandler and Mr. Martin, the Secretary of the Union Stock-Yard Company, who argued in favor of the abattoir on the other side.

On the 15th of April the Committee of the Board of Aldermen made the following report to that body:

Report of the Committee on Police and Health Departments to Board of Aldermen, made April 15, 1875.

The Committee on Police and Health Departments, to whom were referred the annexed preamble and resolution in relation to the establishment of an abattoir on the block of ground bounded by Fifty-eighth and Fifty-ninth Streets, the Eleventh Avenue and the North River, respectfully report:

That your Committee have carefully and maturely considered the subject, have had two public meetings, at which all persons interested, both for and against the measure, were heard by representatives of both, as well as by the President of the Board of Health, who at present, although evidently of opinion that the great excitement occasioned by apprehension of the evil effects of the business to be conducted in the abattoir, upon the public health and the business prospects of the

neighborhood, was without any justifiable cause, declined to give any positive or direct expression of his views upon the subject, or to indicate the probable action of the Board of Health in the premises.

From the information obtained at these meetings of the Committee, it is clear that the intention exists to construct an extensive abattoir at or near the foot of Fifty-ninth Street, North River, and, in connection with the slaughtering of animals, the establishment is to contain the necessary appliances for disposing of the offal and refuse substances, so that there will be combined in the one building processes for killing the animals, rendering the fat, salting the hides, cleaning the intestines, boiling the hoofs and bones—in fact, disposing of the entire animal.

The Board of Health, in the effort to suppress slaughter-houses located indiscriminately in all parts of the city, in 1874 (October 13) passed an ordinance prohibiting the slaughtering of animals in any part of the city south of One Hundred and Tenth Street, except in buildings located directly upon the water-front, each having a capacity sufficient for the yarding and slaughtering, daily, of one-half the entire number of cattle and small stock slaughtered in this city at the time such ordinance was to go into effect (July 4, 1876). On the 19th of January, 1875, the above ordinance was amended, so that Fortieth Street was the southerly limit below which slaughtering would not be allowed, with the exception above noted. An application for a permit has been presented, and, it has been asserted, been favorably received by the Board of Health, from the Union Stock-Yard and Market Company for the erection of the proposed abattoir at Fifty-ninth Street, and, notwithstanding the fact that the application has been withdrawn, the apprehension is general among the citizens that such withdrawal is only temporary, and that a fixed determination exists on the part of the Board of Health to grant the privilege, and on the part of the Stock-Yard and Market Company to exercise it.

The above, your Committee believe, is a fair statement of the case as it exists at the present time, except to say that, notwithstanding the withdrawal of the application for a permit from the Board of Health, the work of erecting the building for abattoir purposes is in continuous and rapid progress.

Your Committee are free to say that the subject is one of much embarrassment. The Legislature of this State, so far as it has the power or right to do so (a question which has never yet been fully or finally determined), conferred upon the Board of Health of this city absolute and unrestricted powers over the lives and property of our citizens. It is greatly to the credit of the Board that, thus far at least, the trust has not been abused, and that these unlimited powers have been exercised with marked intelligence, ability, and discretion. Unrestricted or unchecked power, however, tends naturally and inevitably to tyranny, owing to the weakness inherent in human nature and its many infirmities, which are influenced by so many and varied impulses that a restraining power that can be wielded by those oppressed should exist somewhere in the city government. No department or board, really a subordinate branch of the municipal government, should be vested with such powers, which belong, if they should exist at all, only to the people, the source of all power, or those whom they choose to represent them. A subordinate department of the government of any portion of the people of this country, clothed with arbitrary powers, is an anomaly never contemplated, we will venture to assert, by the founders of our system of republican government.

It is clear that, without the exercise of this power by the Board of Health, the dreaded creation of the abattoir at the foot of Fifty-ninth Street, North River, would not affright the property-owner or resident in the vicinity. Such a proceeding, we feel assured, would not be tolerated by your honorable body, or any other representative body deriving their power or existence directly from the

people. All experience proves, and the evidence of scientists is unanimous in confirming the fact, that establishments of this character are injurious to the health, detrimental to the business, and destructive to real property located in their vicinity, or to the extent affected by their operations. In European cities abattoirs are not permitted, except outside the corporate limits and beyond the confines of the population; while the effects of similar establishments upon the health and business of the principal cities in this country—notably Philadelphia and Chicago—is so clearly proven upon the most irrefragable testimony to be of the most injurious and depressing character that it would be worse than criminal on the part of the authorities of this city not to profit by this dear-bought experience of others, and take steps to prevent similar effects being inflicted upon our citizens.

Already the depressing effects of the fear of the establishment of the abattoir at the foot of Fifty-ninth Street is apparent in the value of real estate in all that portion of the central and most valuable part of this city likely to be injuriously affected by its operations. A single instance will suffice to exhibit this fact unmistakably to your honorable body. The pastor of the Church of St. Paul the Apostle, in representing before your Committee the congregation worshipping in his church in Fifty-ninth Street, between the Eighth and Ninth Avenues, gave the assurance that it was intended to improve the property held by the church by the erection of a new and magnificent church edifice, a large theological seminary, and a parish school, involving an expenditure of more than half a million of dollars; that the plans and specifications had been prepared, and the work of excavating had actually commenced; but if the abattoir was permitted to be located and operated, as proposed, within a few hundred feet of the premises, the undertaking would be abandoned and some other location selected.

The managers of the Roosevelt Hospital, located directly opposite the property of the Church of St. Paul, in Fifty-ninth Street, positively declare that if the abattoir is permitted, as proposed, to go into operation, it will necessitate the abandonment of the building for hospital purposes, and that a proper regard for the health and lives of its inmates will compel their removal to some other locality. The Roosevelt Hospital is the gift to this city, for the benefit of its sick and indigent poor, of one of our most public-spirited and honored citizens; it will be impossible to provide for it another location, as the cost of the land and buildings has absorbed the fund bequeathed for hospital purposes by its benevolent founder; and the depreciation in the value of the property will preclude the possibility of realizing therefrom sufficient to purchase land and erect suitable buildings in another location.

The school officers of the Twenty-second Ward, in a protest against giving the permit to construct the abattoir, say: "Our schools are so situated as to be directly exposed to the noisome stinks that must come from such a slaughterhouse, and we contemplate the erection of a new one in Fifty-seventh Street, in the immediate vicinity of the proposed abattoir." Over sixteen thousand children attended the public schools in that ward during the past year, "whose physical and intellectual training is committed to us as a sacred trust, and we should consider ourselves failing in this high duty did we not vigorously protest against an evil of such gigantic magnitude."

Your Committee believe the establishment of the proposed abattoir would damage irretrievably every interest in its immediate vicinity not directly connected with it. Real estate, particularly, will be the first to feel the blight, and a deterioration in value will inevitably result to such a degree as to prove disastrous to all who have capital invested therein. The deleterious effects of fat-

rendering, bone-boiling, etc., upon that important interest is but too well known and understood by sad experience, as the recollections of the business as conducted at the establishment formerly located at the foot of Thirty-ninth Street, North River, which it took several years' effort on the part of the Board of Health to suppress, is yet vividly retained by those who suffered pecuniarily and otherwise from its operations.

The city, too, will be directly injured, as will every property-owner on the island, as it is clear that any depreciation in the taxable value of property in the vicinity of or affected by the abattoir must be met by increased valuations in all other property in the city, so that every property-owner is directly interested in maintaining the present value of west-side real estate—a value to which our whole city, which paid one-half the expense of the boulevards and drives, that have rendered it so peculiarly desirable and valuable property, has so largely contributed, and is equally interested in maintaining.

Your Committee have confined their observations and opinions, as set forth in this report, only to the distressing and injurious effects, in a pecuniary point of view, of the establishment of the proposed abattoir. But it has another and a graver aspect. The health and lives of a large and constantly-augmenting population are menaced, and, if the Stock-Yard and Market Company is successful, will be seriously jeopardized. To show that this assertion is true, and cannot be successfully controverted, it is only necessary to adduce the testimony of medical men and those conversant with the effects upon a dense population of the noxious exhalations of like establishments in this and every other city in this country and in Europe. They are well known and appreciated by those who have investigated them, equally with those who have suffered from contact with the disgusting and sickening gases that impregnate and vitiate the atmosphere to a distance of miles from the pest-houses where they emanated.

New York City, particularly in the vicinity of Fifty-ninth Street, which is near the territorial and populous centres of the island, is no place for the erection of such an establishment. The pecuniary interests detrimentally affected are too great; the people inconvenienced and injured in health and business are too numerous; the pernicious effects of similar establishments are still too fresh in the recollection of the sufferers, particularly on the west side of the city, ever to permit another immense slaughter-house or fat-rendering and bone-boiling establishment to conduct its operations successfully or without molestation in their very midst. Every valuable consideration that enters into the every-day life of our vast population is adverse to it, and your Committee have only to add that, in their opinion, every legal step necessary to be taken to prevent it, or that has or may be taken by the people-directly affected, should be seconded by the city authorities to the extent of the power vested in the Common Council. The exercise of doubtful powers even would be justifiable in certain contingencies that may arise, as it is clear that the first duty of the municipal government is to protect its citizens in their rights and property, and to prevent any encroachments or violations thereof, even by the most powerful corporations, particularly so when such corporations prove by their acts, in disregarding such rights, to be powerful and soulless monopolies.

Your Committee are aware that by the provisions of the act, Chapter 582, Laws of 1872, being "An act to incorporate the Union Stock-Yard and Market Company, passed May 7, 1872," which are general in their terms and applicable to the whole State, this company may and doubtless do claim the right to establish the abattoir in question without any other authority. It is clear, however, that such a law cannot and should not apply to the city of New York. It

would violate every principle of local government that yet remains to us; and although the State Legislature, in its dealings with this city, has done many things that were better if left undone, it would not, certainly, knowingly or wilfully authorize or empower any individual or corporation to inflict upon our people consequences so dreadful and results so disastrous as are inevitable if this company is permitted to establish the proposed abattoir, with its attendant nuisances and annoyances, in our very midst.

And now as to the preventive: It is clear that it is not in the power of any legislative or executive body to legalize a common, public nuisance. Thanks to our admirably-devised system of government, the judiciary can always be appealed to when all other remedies fail, with confidence that oppressive, tyrannical, or illegal legislation will be rendered nugatory and powerless for evil. This remedy is always available, and, if all others fail, the aggrieved citizens can have recourse to the courts. This, however, should be the last result, all other remedial measures failing. At present your Committee believe the best method to be adopted by the people is to apply to the State Legislature for an amendment to the act, Chapter 582, Laws of 1872, to exempt the city of New York from its provisions, as was doubtless the intention of the act, and the passage of another act, to prohibit for all time to come the establishment of slaughtering, fat-rendering, bone-boiling, or kindred nuisances within the corporate limits of the city of New York.

Your Committee believe your honorable body will coincide with them in the opinion that, so far as the Common Council has the power, it should be exercised in behalf of our aggrieved citizens, by devising remedial measures, and in seconding or endorsing any application they may make to the State Legislature, and in interfering, by request or direction, or both, with the Board of Health, to induce that Board to refuse a permit to the Union Company to erect the proposed abattoir at the foot of Fifty-ninth Street, North River.

The following resolutions, therefore, are respectfully offered for your adoption:

Resolved, That the Legislature of this State be and is hereby respectfully requested to amend Chapter 582, Laws of 1872, so as to exempt the city of New York from its provisions, and to enact a law prohibiting for ever the erection of any abattoir, bone-boiling, fat-rendering, or kindred establishment within the corporate limits of the city of New York; and be it further

Resolved, That the Board of Health of the city of New York be and is hereby requested and, so far as the Common Council has the power, directed not to grant any permit to the Union Stock-Yard and Market Company, or any other company, corporation, or individual, for the erection or establishment of an abattoir at or near the foot of Fifty-ninth Street, North River.

WM. L. COLE,
JOHN J. MORRIS,
AND, BLESSING,

Committee on Police and Health Departments.

After some discussion, in the course of which the President of the Board of Health opposed the resolutions, and is reported to have stated that if passed they would amount to a vote of want of confidence in the Board of Health, which in England would be followed by their resignation. The resolutions, slightly amended, were adopted by a vote of sixteen to four, as follows:

RESOLUTIONS OF ALDERMEN.

Resolved, That the Legislature of this State be and is hereby respectfully requested to amend Chapter 582, Laws of 1872, so as to exempt the city of New York from its provisions, and to enact a law prohibiting for ever the erection of any bone-boiling, fat-rendering, or kindred establishment within the corporate limits of the city of New York; and to prohibit the establishment of an abattoir at or near the foot of Fifty-ninth Street, North River.

And be it further Resolved, That the Board of Health of the city of New York be and is hereby requested and, so far as the Common Council has the power, directed not to grant any permit to the Union Stock-Yard and Market Company, or any other company, corporation, or individual, for the erection or establishment of an abattoir at or near the foot of Fifty-ninth Street, North River.

It was then

Resolved, That the Clerk of this Board be directed to transmit a copy of these resolutions to the Speaker of the Assembly and President of the Senate.

THE MAYOR.

These resolutions were approved by the Mayor on April 20, after having spent an afternoon visiting the slaughter-houses.

EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF HEALTH BOARD.

It would seem from the following extracts from various proceedings of the Board of Health that in this matter they can be condemned out of their own mouths.

The Sanitary Committee of that Board made a report in June, 1874, containing the following words; they say, speaking of the slaughtering business: "And yet the very necessities of the trade, when conducted in the ordinary slaughter-houses, render the whole business in the summer months a source of the pollution of the air with foul, noxious gases."

Dr. E. B. Dalton, Sanitary Superintendent of the Board of Health, cited in the same report, says: "The most conscientious and careful butcher cannot prevent the slaughter-house being a nuisance to all his immediate neighborhood and the city generally."

Inspector Emerson, of the Board of Health, says: "In spite of all the cleanliness that can be exercised, the inevitable presence about the slaughter-house of large quantities of animal matter, such as blood, dung, hides, offal, etc., the saturation of the ground with the liquid portions of this, and the exhalations from them and from the animals themselves, contaminate the air which must at once enter the rooms of adjacent dwellings."

Inspector Maclay, cited in the same report of the Board of Health, says: "The blood and offal, not being promptly removed, undergo putrefaction, filling the air with pestilent odors and being a prolific source of disease. The increasing prevalence of cholera-infantum, typhoid fever, erysipelas, and other diseases, may be traced in part to this cause."

Sanitary Superintendent James says that in May, 1873, he made a

tour of inspection of the slaughter-houses with a view of ascertaining how they affected the public health. Although he went on Saturday, which was the general cleaning day, when the premises inspected were supposed to be at their best, he found "many of the yards, though not yet dry from recent flushing, were, to say the least, filthy, containing pools of bloody water in the several depressions of the pavement, with pieces of offal and portions of manure adhering to fences and in the corners."

Mr. Pfeiffer, quoted in the same report of the Board of Health, says: "The majority of the New York slaughter-houses are in a filthy condition, owing to the neglect of sanitary precautions and faulty construction; and the odors prevailing in them seem to me injurious to the meat which is stored there, and prejudicial to the health of the neighborhood. I became sick with nausea and headache after a few hours' inspection in May last, though the inspection was made on Saturday, when there was no business and all the places had been cleaned as thoroughly as possible."

The report then continues: "It cannot be doubted by any one who frequently inspects these establishments that one of the contributing causes of this increased sickness-rate is the defilement of the air, the yards, the streets, the sewers, etc., by the filth incident to the slaughter business as now conducted.

"We cannot overlook in this connection the opinions of experienced sanitary officers and other qualified observers. These opinions have been given as a result of a study of existing causes of disease, or have been elicited in the efforts of municipal authorities to regulate slaughtering. They uniformly condemn the ordinary slaughter-house as an important factor in the causation of unhealthfulness, and recommend its abatement."

To explain this position they cite Dr. Letherby, one of the most experienced sanitary officers in London, and Dr. Mapother, Health Officer of Dublin, who said: "The plague in London in 1349 and 1361 raged particularly in the neighborhood of Smithfield, because of the pollution of the ground by offal, and all the slaughtering in the city was forbidden by Edward III." They cite also Dr. James A. Stewart, Health Officer of Baltimore, who says: "Our city is still suffering from the nuisance of slaughtering establishments within the city limits, and, notwithstanding the strictest watchfulness and order on the part of the Police and Health Department, prove constantly a serious punishment and detriment to the neighborhoods in which they exist."

The following extracts are taken from the report of Edward B. Dalton, Sanitary Superintendent of the Metropolitan Board of Health, dated April 20, 1867:

"The constant bellowing of the footsore and homesick cattle, the ceaseless moaning and bleating of the calves and sheep, and the squealing and grunting of the pigs, disturb, and indeed oftentimes entirely de-

stroy, the sleep of the occupants of the surrounding tenements, which are generally filled with the laboring classes, who can ill afford to be thus robbed of their natural rest.

"The emanations from the animals themselves, thus kept in unhealthy condition, and from their excretions, keep the atmosphere constantly tainted; while the hordes of rats, flies, and vermin which they attract render a residence in their vicinity, especially in hot weather, almost intolerable. Indeed, none but those who have personally investigated this matter can form any idea of the suffering to which the inhabitants of these dwellings are subjected during the summer months.

"The houses are crowded, and the air within them becomes to the last degree foul and unwholesome; and yet any attempt on the part of the occupants to improve their condition by opening the windows for fresh air only gives entrance to noisome gases and swarms of insects.

"The most conscientious and careful butcher cannot prevent a slaughter-house being a nuisance to his immediate neighbors and to the city generally."

Doctor Paine, in his report, says "that the business of slaughtering animals necessitates the collection and confinement, for a certain time, on said premises, of cattle in greater number than is allowed by the Board in any other kind of premises within the built-up portions of the city; which cattle, by their lowing and bleating, cause an undue disturbance of the neighborhood, and contaminate the air by their dung and urine."

COUNCIL OF HYGIENE.

The report by the Council of Hygiene on the sanitary condition of New York, made in 1865 by the Citizens' Association, contains the following words: "The 177 slaughter-houses in this city are too offensive to health and decency to be longer permitted in their present localities. These establishments are now thrown into the most crowded districts, and it is to be observed that a loathsome train of dependent nuisances is to be found grouped in the same neighborhood."

The various inspectors employed by the Council of Hygiene unanimously condemn slaughtering within the city as most injurious in its effects.

OPINIONS OF MEDICAL MEN.

The experience of the medical world is unanimous upon this point. The following sentence contains the substance of a communication lately made by many of the professors of medicine and physicians in the city of Philadelphia, in opposition to a similar abattoir sought to be established in that city: "All the information which we have been able to obtain satisfies us that the most scientific processes and the strictest attention to cleanliness have everywhere throughout the country failed to prevent such establishments from proving intolerable nuisances."

Professor Henry Hartsborne, after a thorough examination of the subject of abattoirs, came to the following conclusion: "With all appliances and methods of utilization so far known, and with all obtainable vigilance of supervision, the absolute freedom of a large abattoir from local decomposition of refuse cannot be relied upon. Negligent administration of such an establishment would allow this to become an enormous evil."

Dr. John H. Rauch said in reference to the same proposition to establish a similar abattoir in the city of Philadelphia:

"This is the first time in the history of slaughtering in this country that it is proposed to locate a drove-yard and abattoir in what may be termed the heart of a city, or what certainly will soon be the centre of population, in consequence of the inseparable conditions that follow it; and while it is true that many improvements have been made in the mode of conducting these operations, especially within the last five years, both from a commercial and sanitary standpoint, still, taking all these into consideration, judging from my experience and the general principles of sanitary science, I am of the opinion that they should not be tolerated where population is dense or likely to become so. In spite of everything that can be done, offence will sometimes arise. I have more than once been led to hope, from many experiments, as well as from the great improvements in the machinery and appliances made to render the system a success, that the time might come when such establishments in the midst of population might be safe and proper; but in this I have so far been disappointed."

The physicians of Philadelphia generally united in protesting against an abattoir in their city. The Children's Hospital, the Wills Ophthalmic Hospital, the Medical Board of the Philadelphia Hospital, the Preston Lying-in Charity, the Medical Board of the Charity Hospital, the Philadelphia County Medical Society, the Preston Retreat and the State Hospital for Women and Infants, the Orthopædic Hospital, and the United States Naval Hospital on the Schuylkill, all protested earnestly against this abattoir as destructive to life and injurious to health.

AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION.

The American Public Health Association, an institution consisting of the most eminent sanitarians not only of this country, but of the world, had the whole subject of abattoirs before it at its meeting in November, 1874, in Philadelphia, and adopted the following resolutions:

"*Resolved*, That the best practicable management of large abattoirs with cattle and hog yards cannot be depended upon at all times to prevent their drainage from contaminating the water and the atmosphere in its vicinity; therefore, such establishments should be located as far as possible from the centres of population, and, if possible, upon tide-water."

Doctors Henry Hartshorne, Ellerslie Wallace, S. D. Gross, Francis G. Smith, Jr., and J. Minis Hays, on the 28th of December, 1874, addressed the following language to the Common Council of Philadelphia, after citing the experience of Boston and the removal of the abattoirs of that city to a distance of several miles from the city, and the experience of Chicago: "But we urge that it is the duty of the city by its constituted authorities to refuse sanction and permission to the location of an establishment designed to be permanent in the midst of its rapidly-improving domain, with an immensely-increasing population, which there is abundant reason to believe cannot and will not be made secure from an influence of a most deleterious kind upon the health of a large portion of the city."

Dr. James A. Stewart, the Commissioner of Health and the Registrar of the city of Baltimore, wrote on the 25th of January, 1875: "Nothing would induce me to consent to the establishment of an abattoir near the city of Baltimore, and in my report I say 'at least six miles.' All large cities must learn this lesson, either through wise and timely observation of the experience of others, or through the bitter chastisement of their own."

William Clendenin, M.D., certifies that for eight years he was the Superintendent of Public Health in Cincinnati. "I am acquainted with the modern systems and improvements in the conduct of such establishments, and I am clearly of opinion that they cannot be carried on in the vicinity of densely-populated districts without injury to the health and comfort of the inhabitants."

Dr. Thomas Bevan, for ten years the physician of the Chicago Hospital, testified, on the 2d of January, 1875, as follows: "During my ten years of service as attending physician in the Cook County Hospital, we have never had an interval of fully three months without the development of puerperal fever, muco-purulent ophthalmia, or erysipelas in the wards, a great part of which is due to the effluvia coming from the stock-yards, slaughter-houses, and rendering establishments in question. I have detected the odor in certain thermometric and hygrometric conditions of the atmosphere at a distance of seven miles, which is due to the topographical situation of Chicago, on a dead-level for many miles. I consider it essential that stock-yards and abattoirs should be located as far as possible from the centre of population, and even then the most rigid cleanliness is necessary to protect the community from almost inevitable detriment to public health."

Dr. Hosmer A. Johnson, President of the Board of Health in Chicago, comes to the same conclusion.

Joseph Medill, the Mayor of Chicago from 1871 to 1873, testified that "one of the matters about which there was the most constant complaint, on the part of large masses of citizens, was the noxious odors which emanated from the slaughtering and rendering establishments in the city."

and the immediate vicinity of the city. . . . In my opinion, a drove-yard, abattoir, or rendering establishment in the heart of a populous city can never be a pleasant neighbor, and must necessarily contaminate the atmosphere for a considerable distance around it, no matter what care, skill, and science may be brought to bear in its management and control."

Harvey D. Colvin, the present Mayor of Chicago, testifies to the same effect.

Fernando Jones, a citizen of Chicago, testified that "there is an abominable and intolerable odor emanating from the slaughter-houses at Bridgeport, which is located about two miles to the southwest of my residence. At times the air is so heavily loaded with these odors that my house becomes almost untenable. The whole south side of this city is afflicted with these foul stench, and complaints from the inhabitants are universal and of almost daily occurrence. . . . There can be no doubt but that the property in the third, fourth, and fifth Wards of this city, which are amongst the finest portions of the city for residence, has seriously depreciated in value by the existence of these establishments, and purchasers and tenants make this a constant source of objection. Having sold large interests of real estate in that portion of this city, and also rented houses therein, I personally know this as a fact."

The *Graphic* of April 22 gives the following opinion of

DR. WILLIAM A. HAMMOND:

"What would you regard as the principal causes of danger in the proximity of a slaughter-house?"

"In the first place, all the animals that will be slaughtered in the proposed abattoir will not be in a good state of health, and the emanations from diseased animals are probably in the highest degree injurious. It quite frequently happens that oxen are affected with inflammation or disease of the liver or kidneys, and in such cases the emanations would be decidedly prejudicial to health, if not capable of causing death. Several years ago I demonstrated that pus corpuscles given off from open wounds were transported through the air in the ward of a hospital, and that patients at a distance from the source of the corpuscles became affected with purulent disorders, such as hospital gangrene. I doubt whether danger from such a source might be lessened by careful inspection of animals before they were killed, and I doubt whether entire safety could be secured."

"What do you think is the effect of the particles given off during the processes of rendering fat, cleaning intestines, making glue, and manufacturing fertilizers?"

"An abattoir is essentially a worse place than a slaughter-house, because these processes take place within it, and a hundred times more care is necessary to maintain it in a proper sanitary condition. Of course, if no decomposition is allowed to take place, these processes would not necessarily be injurious to health; but to my knowledge this never has been done yet. In my opinion no risk should be taken. The experiment should be conducted at a distance from the city?"

"Has not an impression prevailed that emanations from decomposing animal matter are not injurious, while those from decomposing vegetable matter are?"

“Yes; but while there are numerous examples of people being exposed to such emanations and escaping disease, yet there are many more to the contrary. There are hundreds of examples, and they are sufficient to offset any number of cases of immunity. In fact, if decomposing animal matter is not injurious to health, such institutions as health boards would be deprived of half their value.’

“In regard to the yarding of animals, may not this be detrimental to the health of those living in the vicinity?’

“Undoubtedly the emanations from their excretions are decidedly injurious. Even a crowd of human beings is a prolific source of disease.’

“What effect would the existence of an abattoir at the foot of Fifty-ninth Street have upon the patients of Roosevelt Hospital?’

“It would have an extremely bad effect for the reasons I have just stated, and also on account of the cries of the animals. This I consider a very important reason for not locating the abattoir at that place.’

“Will thorough cleansing make an abattoir unobjectionable on the score of health?’

“No. The walls of an abattoir gradually absorb the emanations which are given off, and thus the building itself becomes a source of disease. An abattoir should be situated on high ground, where the wind can have free access to it. It should have special drainage, which should empty directly into a running stream. It should have an unlimited supply of water for cleansing purposes; its walls should be coated with an impervious substance, its floor be made of concrete or hydraulic cement; it should be inspected several times a day by an officer of health with power to rectify abuses; and, finally, it should be located far away from any thickly-inhabited district.’

“What is the nature of the poisonous gases given off from decaying animal matter?’

“They are phosphuretted and sulphuretted hydrogen. The former is very poisonous, and acts with great energy on the living animal body when absorbed into the blood by respiration. In regard to the latter, sulphuretted hydrogen, Dupuytren found that one-eight-hundredth part of this gas in the air was sufficient to kill birds in a few seconds. In my own experiments I found that small animals died after a few minutes when the one-thousandth part of the atmosphere consisted of sulphuretted hydrogen.’

“Is it true that animalcules are conveyed through the air from putrefying flesh?’

“Yes; they are transported to considerable distances, and give rise to disease. It is very well known that animals are frequently brought to market in New York which are infected with diseases which can be propagated in this manner. These fitting organisms are veritable animalcules, and belong to the genus bacteria. Two French physicians, Messrs. Coze and Feltz, introduced bacteria directly in the blood of animals, and produced putrid diseases. In such cases the microscope shows that the blood corpuscles have undergone very material modification. The lungs, liver, spleen, kidneys, and stomach become diseased.’”

DR. HENRY J. BOWDITCH.

Henry J. Bowditch, in speaking of the abattoir at Brighton, near Boston, testified: “It is four and a half miles distant from the city proper, and over two miles from the city of Cambridge. . . . I never would consent to have the Brighton abattoir, even as it is conducted now, overlooked and superintended by the State Board of Health, put in

the midst of a dense population ; and as a citizen and member of the State Board of Health I should most strenuously oppose it by every means in my power."

All of the testimony above referred to has been abstracted from a cause argued this year in Philadelphia.

CONCLUSION.

The municipal authorities of all large cities have been compelled to move the slaughtering and rendering establishments from those cities, either to the outskirts or to a distance.

This is not the place to relate the history of the conflicts between municipal authorities seeking to secure the public health on the one hand, and abattoir companies and private greed on the other. It is sufficient to say that at the proper time these facts shall not be wanting.

It is to be observed that it is not claimed by any one that public necessity requires more slaughter-houses than at present exist. The abattoirs on the East River, and the new one at Thirty-fourth Street on the North River, have more than sufficient capacity to supply all public wants.

The only point in this controversy is whether the selfish interests of a company striving to create a monopoly shall be permitted to destroy health, jeopardize life, and ruin the value of property in the fairest quarter of our city.

The Committee of Safety propose to prevent these evils, if possible.

They have organized as follows, and now call upon all citizens to sustain them in their efforts :

ROYAL PHELPS, Esq., *President.*

AMOS R. ENO, Esq.,

HON. FERNANDO WOOD,

HON. ALEXANDER SPAULDING,

} *Vice-Presidents.*

JAMES P. CAMPBELL, Esq., *Secretary.*

ROYAL PHELPS, Esq.,

AMOS R. ENO, Esq.,

HON. FERNANDO WOOD,

HON. ALEXANDER SPAULDING,

RUDOLPH A. WITTHAUS, Esq.,

JAMES P. CAMPBELL, Esq.,

REV. ALFRED YOUNG,

HORATIO PAINE, M.D.,

LEWIS L. DELAFIELD, Esq.,

BENJAMIN P. FAIRCHILD, Esq.,

THOMAS S. BRENNAN, Esq.,

WILLIAM H. ALLEN, Esq.,

} *Executive
Committee.*

CONRAD BRAKER, JR., Esq.,

ROWLAND N. HAZARD, Esq.,

ROSWELL D. HATCH, Esq.,

} *Finance
Committee.*



